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ABSTRACT

This monograph explores the nature and development of aggression and violence in children and youth, especially as manifested within the school setting. It examines the extent of the problem, typical reactions to aggression and violence within the school, and the impact of these reactions on the behavior of students with emotional/behavior disorders. The development of such behavior in children is attributed to such conditions as observation of aggression, victimization, few positive affective social bonds, and reinforcement of the child's own aggressive behavior. Factors possibly explaining the disappointing results of previous prevention and treatment efforts are also discussed. Four types of violent behavior are identified: (1) situational violence (may be exhibited by approximately 40 percent of the population); (2) relationship violence (25 percent of the population); (3) predatory violence (8 percent); and (4) psychopathological violence (0.5 percent). Guidelines for the prevention and treatment of each of these types of violence is offered, suggesting that interventions that are effective with one type of violence may not be effective with other types. Schools are urged to adopt approaches to deal with the various risk factors related to the different types of violence. (Contains 115 references.) (DB)

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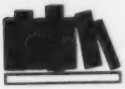

From the Mini-Library Series on
Emotional/Behavioral Disorders

Types of Youth Aggression and Violence and Implications for Prevention and Treatment

Richard Van Acker
University of Illinois at Chicago

EC 304536

Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders

Published by
The Council for Children
with Behavioral Disorders

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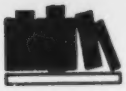

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About the Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders

Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders

CCBD is an international professional organization committed to promoting and facilitating the education and general welfare of children/youth with behavioral and emotional disorders. CCBD, whose members include educators, parents, mental health personnel, and a variety of other professionals, actively pursues quality educational services and program alternatives for persons with behavioral disorders, advocates for the needs of such children and youth, emphasizes research and professional growth as vehicles for better understanding behavioral disorders, and provides professional support for persons who are involved with and serve children and youth with behavioral disorders.

In advocating for the professionals in the field of behavioral disorders, CCBD (a division of The Council for Exceptional Children) endorses the Standards for Professional Practice and Code of Ethics adopted by the Delegate Assembly of The Council for Exceptional Children in 1983.

About This Monograph

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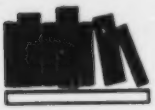

About the Mini-Library Series on Emotional/Behavioral Disorders

Foreword

Today, professionals are struggling to discover ways to deal successfully with a heterogeneous population of students, some of whom are especially difficult to manage and instruct. No other group of youngsters poses a greater challenge than those variously labelled "seriously emotionally disturbed," "behaviorally disordered," or "emotionally/behaviorally disordered." These children and youth manifest a combination of social, academic, and behavior problems that require not only powerful individual strategies but also effective program options. Fortunately, there is a growing body of knowledge regarding what constitutes quality practices for students with emotional/behavioral disorders (E/BD).

This mini-library series targets the most crucial issues and concerns regarding these children and youth. It covers the needs of students of various ages who are being served in different programs and settings and who demand diverse policy considerations. The mini-library derives from the 1995 international conference sponsored by the Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders. The seven monographs and their authors are

- *Best Practices for Managing the Behavior of Adolescents with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders Within the School Environment*
  Beverley H. Johns, Eleanor C. Guetzloe, Mitchell Yell, Brenda Scheuermann, Jo Webber, Valerie G. Carr, and Carl R. Smith
- *Developing a System of Care: Interagency Collaboration for Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders*
  Russell J. Skiba, Lewis Polsgrove, and Karen Nasstrom
- *Early Intervention for Young Children At Risk for Emotional/Behavioral Disorders: Implications for Policy and Practice*
  Wesley Brown, Maureen A. Conroy, James J. Fox, Joseph Wehby, Carol Davis, and Mary McEvoy
- *Effective Strategies for Teaching Appropriate Behaviors to Children With Emotional/Behavioral Disorders*
  Robert B. Rutherford, Jr., Mary M. Quinn, and Sarup R. Mathur

- *Planning and Implementing Effective Programs for School-Aged Children and Youth with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders Within Inclusive Schools*
  Howard S. Muscott, Daniel P. Morgan, and Nancy B. Meadows
- *Teacher-Mediated Behavior Management Strategies for Children With Emotional/Behavioral Disorders*
  Sarup R. Mathur, Mary M. Quinn, Robert B. Rutherford, Jr.
- *Types of Youth Aggression and Violence and Implications for Prevention and Treatment*
  Richard Van Acker

As editors, we strove to bring together information with practical value to the teachers, administrators, and other professionals who must respond to the challenges posed by children and youth with E/BD. We hope this mini-library series will contribute to your success and the success of the students with whom you work.

Lyndal M. Bullock
University of North Texas

Robert A. Gable
Old Dominion University

Series Editors

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Introduction

The United States has been reported to be the most violent country in the industrialized world (Fingerhut & Kleinman, 1990). This violence is being more frequently perpetrated by and directed towards children and youth. The school setting, once thought to be a safe haven, is evolving into a popular marketplace for violent criminal enterprises. In addition to the typical demand of promoting educational development, our schools are charged with the task of assisting children to reach adulthood in the midst of this escalating violence. Alarmingly, schools have few programs aimed at the prevention and treatment of aggression and violence that have proven to effectively alter the course of these behaviors (Dodge, 1993; Guerra, Eron, Huesmann, Tolan, & Van Acker, in press; Tolan & Guerra, 1994).

In the following discussion, we will explore the nature and the development of aggression and violence in children and youth, especially as manifested within the school setting. We will examine typical reactions to aggression and violence within the school and explore the impact of these reactions on youth behavior. Factors that might help explain the disappointing results of previous prevention and treatment efforts will be presented.

Four types of youth violence will be proposed along with school-based factors that may influence each type. These types of youth violence, while not totally mutually exclusive, seem to differ in stability, prevalence, and causes. Interventions that are effective with one type of violence may not be effective with other types of violence. Moreover, the optimal timing of intervention may vary with the type of violence targeted for change (Tolan & Guerra, 1994). Therefore, suggestions for the prevention and treatment of each type of youth violence will be discussed.

Increases in Youth Violence and Aggression

Violent behavior typically includes serious and extreme behavior intended to cause physical harm to another person or to property. Aggression is less extreme behavior; can be physical or verbal in nature; and is intended to cause physical, psychological, or emotional harm. The research literature rarely differentiates aggressive behavior from violent behavior; thus, these terms often are used interchangeably (Guerra et al., in press; Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995).

According to Bureau of Justice statistics (U.S. Department of Justice, 1993), violent juvenile crime has increased substantially in recent years. Juvenile arrests for violent criminal behavior increased 41% between the years 1982 and 1991. Not only the rates but the seriousness and lethality have also increased. For example, the number of juvenile arrests for murder increased by 93% during the same reporting period. Firearm-related homicides for adolescents have increased over 150% since 1985 (Elliott, 1994). Violent victimization of children and youth, also, has demonstrated a drastic increase, especially for children between the ages of 12 and 15 (Elliott, 1994).

Not surprisingly, an increase in violence within the school setting also has been reported. Assault, theft, and vandalism frequently are identified as serious forms of violent behavior within the school setting. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (1989) reported that approximately three million attempted or completed assaults, rapes, robberies, or thefts occurred within school buildings or on school property in 1988, including 76,000 aggravated assaults and 350,000 simple assaults.

Recently, there has been some concern that because the most heinous crimes get undue coverage, popular media have misrepresented the true picture of school violence and aggression. In fact, despite the increased occurrence of violence, schools remain one of the safest locations within a given community. The type of gratuitous violence that

often becomes the focus of media reports is relatively rare in U.S. public schools. The California Department of Education (1990) indicated that there were approximately 20 violent crimes reported per 1,000 students during the 1988-1989 school year. Most of these were simple assaults (without weapons), minor thefts, or vandalism. The number of gun possessions reported translated to approximately one gun per school district per year. Nevertheless, serious violence does occur within our schools; the level of this violence, however, is far lower than in other segments of society. Attention to only the most serious forms of school violence may lead school personnel to hold a false perception of their school's safety.

Teachers report that other, more subtle forms of violent and aggressive acts are more typical within the school setting. In a recent study, Furlong, Morrison, and Dear (1994) asked teachers to indicate behaviors that were observed in their school over a 1-month period. Table 1 gives some indication of the nature of aggressive and violent behaviors reported in the schools. The results suggest that serious violent behaviors (e.g., assault with a weapon, sexual assault) occurred in only a small number of the schools. In contrast, fighting, swearing, theft, and verbal threats were reported by the vast majority of teachers. Obviously, reports of extremely violent behaviors impact greatly on the school environment. Nevertheless, the more common and less extreme aggressive behaviors serve to detract from the positive learning environment and may act as a catalyst for greater violence. The School Violence Advisory Panel supports the inclusion of verbal harassment and intimidation within definitions of school violence. Even more subtle types of behavior such as psychological intimidation and harassment (e.g., name calling, public ridicule) are salient forms of aggression to which children are frequently exposed.

Public concern has established a demand for legislation, prevention efforts, and intervention programs designed to address youth violence and aggression. Clearly, efforts to address violence and aggression in children and youth are not concerns for school personnel alone. Effective prevention and intervention require collaborative efforts from a variety of sources including families; schools; social service providers; and community, state, and federal agencies. The school, however, is the one social institution that "touches" most of the children in this nation for a considerable period of time during their developmental years. Therefore, it is important to explore violence and aggression in children and youth with an eye toward the role the school can play in prevention and treatment.

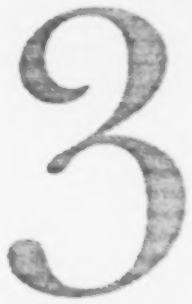
TABLE 1
Percentage of Teachers Reporting Behavior as Having Occurred on Their Campus Within a One-Month Period

Student cursing at another	94
Someone grabbing another	88
Someone getting punched/slapped	85
Someone getting teased or made fun of	83
Property stolen without force	80
Verbal threat	74
Someone being stared down	69
Property (other than automobile) vandalized	62
Ethnic conflicts	54
Sexual harassment	53
Bullying by gang	52
Fight resulting in need for medical attention	36
Automobile vandalized	35
Threat by someone on drugs	28
Someone cut with a sharp object	15
Robbery with force	12
Sexual attack	6
Someone hit/hurt with a weapon	4

Note. From "Addressing School Violence as Part of Schools' Education Mission," by M.J. Furlong, G.M. Morrison, & J.D. Dear, 1994, *Preventing School Failure, 38*, p. 12. Copyright 1994 by Helen Dwight Reid Educational Foundation. Reprinted with permission.

There is overwhelming evidence to suggest that youth violence and aggression have shown a dramatic increase. Unfortunately, the specific nature of violent and aggressive acts and the factors that impact the display of violence and aggression within the school setting are not well understood, and much of the media coverage seems to misrepresent the true nature of school violence. A focus on only the most serious acts of violence and aggression may lead educators to believe that they need not be concerned with the types of aggression and violence displayed in their schools. Dear, Scott, and Marshall (1994) reported that over 75% of school staff and students they interviewed indicated that school violence was a major issue for the nation but they did not feel that violence was a problem *at their school*. It is clear that efforts to design appropriate and effective strategies to address school violence are hindered by a general failure to clarify the nature and extent of youth violence and aggression.

The Development of Aggressive and Violent Behavior



Aggressive and violent behavior is common among adolescents and represents a continuum of involvement rather than an either/or state of being. Studies suggest between 20% and 40% of males and 4% to 15 % of females report one or more serious acts of violence (Elliott, 1994; Tolan & Guerra, 1994). The onset of this type of behavior among the general population typically coincides with the beginning of the adolescent years and diminishes in early adulthood (Lorion, Tolan, & Wahler, 1987; Moffit, 1993). National self-report data (Elliott, 1994) indicate that the age of highest risk for the initiation of serious violent behavior is 15 to 16 years. After age 17, participation in violent and aggressive activity drops dramatically. Moreover, if serious violent behavior is not displayed by age 20, then there is little probability that a person will ever become a violent offender. Whether measured by frequency, seriousness, or variety of acts perpetrated, violence and aggression, for most youth, begin and end within the adolescent years (Tolan, 1987). However, a small percentage of children and youth, manifest violent and aggressive behavior earlier, practice it repeatedly, and continue this behavior well into adulthood. An estimated 5% to 8% of males and 3% to 6% of females manifest this pattern of violent antisocial behavior (Tracy, Wolfgang, & Figlio, 1990). Antisocial behavior may be observed in these children as early as 4 to 9 years of age (Patterson & Bank, 1986; Patterson, Capaldi, & Bank, 1991).

The development of chronic aggressive and violent behavior is complex and appears to involve the interplay of multiple risk factors. Individual factors, such as neurological, hormonal, or other physiological abnormalities stemming from genetic (Cadoret, 1978; Thapar & McGuffin, 1993), perinatal, traumatic, or other causes undoubtedly play some role in the violent and aggressive behavior displayed by some youth (Mednick, Brennan, & Kendal, 1988). However, the presence of environmental, familial, and cognitive characteristics that promote the learning and expression of aggressive and violent behavior probably

accounts for the greatest portion of the variation in aggression and violence both across individuals and across situations.

Four specific conditions have been shown to be most conducive to the learning and maintenance of aggression:

- The child is provided many opportunities to observe aggression (Bandura, 1979; Eron, Huesmann, Lefkowitz, & Walder, 1972).
- The child is the object of aggression (Dodge, Bates, & Petit, 1990).
- The child is given few opportunities to develop positive affective social bonds with others (Hawkins & Weis, 1985).
- The child is reinforced for his or her own aggression (Patterson, 1976, 1986).

These conditions enable the acquisition of attitudes, beliefs, expectations, and emotional responses which support, tolerate, and promote the use of violence and aggression.

Observation of Aggression

Many children, especially those living in poor, urban neighborhoods, are exposed to an environment that places them in close proximity to repeated violence. For example, Shakoor and Chalmers (1991) conducted a study of violence and co-victimization of children living in Chicago. They reported that 75% of the boys and 10% of the girls in their study had witnessed the shooting, stabbing, robbing, or killing of another person. However, even children not living in violent neighborhoods are exposed repeatedly to excessive violence through television, films, and even video games (Eron, 1986; Huesmann, 1986; Singer & Singer, 1986; Turner, Hesse, & Peterson-Lewis, 1986). Gerbner and Signorielli (1990) reported that an average of 26.4 acts of violence were displayed in each hour of children's television cartoon programming.

Victimization

Changes in the family structure and in the nature of family relationships can result in increased levels of family violence, substance abuse, child abuse, and neglect. Domestic violence is one of the most common forms reported. Severe violence has been estimated to be a chronic feature of almost 13% of all marriages in the United States (Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980). According to Straus and his associates, between 1.4 and 2.3 million children have been beaten by a parent at some point during their childhood. Children who have experienced repeated physi-

cal abuse have been shown to employ a restricted, rigid understanding of approaches to solving common social conflicts. Haskett (1990) reported that the problem-solving strategies employed by abused children consisted largely of negative and aggressive tactics.

Bonding

Authorities speculate that failure to develop social bonds with parents, other important individuals (e.g., teachers), and key social institutions (e.g., school, church) increases the probability for the manifestation of antisocial behavior, aggression, and violence (Hirschi, 1969). Again, children living in inner-city environments are exposed to increased risk. Often neighborhoods of concentrated poverty lack any effective social or cultural organization that might promote social bonding and the development of conventional norms and values. Support networks and effective social controls are difficult to establish in such areas due to high transience.

The failure to develop critical bonding with significant others, however, is not a risk for children living in poor families and communities alone. Hawkins and Weis (1985) hypothesize that increased violence and aggression within the school setting are indicative of decreased social bonding between students and the school. This failure to bond with the school is a risk factor confronting children across the country. Hawkins and Weis describe three conditions that they believe promote the development of social bonding to the school:

- Students must be provided opportunities to become involved in conventional activities within the school.
- Once included within these activities, they must have the skills to be successful.
- Finally, students must be reinforced for productive involvement.

Unfortunately, many of the students at risk for the development of aggression are also most at risk for differential treatment by school personnel and for school failure. These students often manifest behaviors teachers find intolerable and difficult to address (Gunter, Jack, Depaepe, Reed, & Harrison, 1994). Equal access to programs and activities within the school setting often are denied to these students, out of fear that their behavior will disrupt the activity for others. They typically generate the lowest grade-point averages (Wagner, 1989) and contribute substantially to the staggering dropout rate reported nationally. In general, they are provided with frequent messages that confirm the belief "school is not for them." The impact of various school practices upon

students at risk for the development for aggression will be discussed in greater detail in the next section.

Reinforcement of Aggression

The aggressive and violent behaviors displayed by children and youth are often positively reinforced. For example, some parents direct their sons and daughters to employ aggressive and violent behaviors as a way to solve social disagreements and praise them when they "stand up for themselves." Aggressive interactions with peers can result in an increase in contingent reinforcement. For example, when two small children fight over a toy, an aggressive act by one child may result in the other child surrendering the toy. As children grow older and enter junior and senior high school, a status hierarchy emerges, and violence and aggression have been related to increased success in status-related competitions (Elliott, 1994).

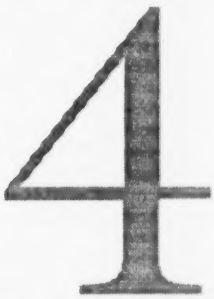
Aggression and violence also may be negatively reinforced. Carr, Taylor, and Robinson (1991) examined the interactions of preschoolers and student teachers. They identified two groups of students. One group whom they called "problem children" displayed a variety of challenging behaviors such as hitting, kicking, biting, and throwing objects. The second group, on the other hand, were generally well behaved and compliant children and were labeled "non problem children." Problem children were provided less instruction, and activities assigned to them were ones least likely to promote resistance from the student. Carr and his associates concluded that the students employed their conflictual behavior to avoid and/or escape more direct instruction and difficult assignments. The teachers, perhaps unconsciously, provide negative reinforcement for these aggressive and violent behaviors through their "curriculum of non-instruction" (Gunter et al., 1994).

Van Acker, Grant, and Henry (1994) reported that students experience significantly different interactions with their teachers on the basis of the student's peer-nominated risk for aggression. For example, an examination of teacher attention to students in the upper quartile of risk for aggression revealed that only verbal reprimand was provided with a conditional probability above chance levels. This means that these students experience a classroom where the only reaction they can predict is one related to their inappropriate behavior. There is evidence to suggest that when students experience increased cynicism about the predictability of the world and a decreased sense of competence in dealing with its daily demands, problem behaviors are more frequent and more serious (Goldenberg, 1973; Jessor & Jessor, 1977; Kaplan, 1975).

Cynicism can be prevented and self-efficacy increased through repeated exposure to environments wherein it is clear that desired consequences are gained through the subject's own actions (Bandura, Adams, & Beyer, 1977). Interactions between teachers and students who display aggressive and violent behaviors, however, generally are not positive. Gunter and his associates (Gunter, Denny, Jack, Shores, & Nelson, 1993; Gunter, et al., 1994; Shores, Gunter, Denny, & Jack, 1993) have reported that negative interactions are seven times more prevalent than positive interactions between these students and their teachers. Negative interactions between teachers and students occurred 22% of the time, while positive interactions were observed only 3% of the time. Moreover, appropriate behavior was seldom praised or otherwise reinforced.

In summary, there appear to be two pathways to the development of aggressive and violent behavior. The first, comprising the greatest number of youth, involves time-limited violence and aggression displayed during adolescence. The second, more serious pathway involves children who begin to display this behavior in early childhood and continue into adulthood. We have reviewed some of the conditions thought to most dramatically impact the development of aggression. However, within each of these conditions, only some children grow up to be violent or aggressive. No single condition by itself seems capable of explaining more than a small portion of the individual variation in aggression and violence. We believe that a convergence of a number of these factors during a child's development together with constitutional factors produces cognitive structures and processes that predispose some children to aggressive and violent behavior (Guerra, Huesmann, Tolan, Van Acker, & Eron, in press).

The Responsiveness of Aggressive and Violent Behavior to Intervention



As children enter the school setting, they bring with them the behaviors and values learned at home and in their community. For most children, these values and behaviors serve them well in school. Others, however, appear ill prepared to meet the demands of the school setting. Such students often are at risk for increased school failure. The presentation of academic tasks becomes aversive as the student fears increased failure and embarrassment. These students may develop actions and behaviors that allow them to avoid or escape these tasks. Initially, the student may resist participation in the specified activity. Subsequent to this resistance, teachers and students may enter into a series of escalating responses to one another's attempt to control the situation. This chain of behaviors can lead to a power struggle that neither the student nor the teacher can easily abate. Aggression or violence displayed by the student, the teacher, or both may surface as an outcome of a power struggle.

Behavior management programs that employ applied behavior analytic procedures, especially those dependent upon teacher-delivered contingencies, are commonly employed in school settings to address violent and aggressive behavior. Unfortunately, violence and aggression appear to be particularly intractable (Dodge, 1993; Eron, 1994). Feindler and Ecton (1986) have suggested that practitioners face a variety of obstacles when employing contingency-based interventions to reduce aggressive behavior:

- Covert aggressive behaviors often are low frequency and may go undetected and/or unconsequated.
- Contingent peer attention and recognition for aggression competes with adult-managed contingencies.
- There is a lack of powerful competing reinforcers for desired behavioral alternatives to aggression.
- Teachers and other change agents are often inconsistent in the delivery of contingencies.

School personnel generally profess a belief in, and a desire to promote, democratic practices in their mission or philosophy statements yet undertake day-to-day autocratic procedures that contradict these principles. Schools invest heavily in the use of suppression strategies (e.g., delivery of aversive consequences, suspension, expulsion) when dealing with violent and aggressive behavior. For example, in an analysis of discipline referrals, Sugai, Kameenui, and Colvin (1993, as cited in Walker et al., 1995) indicated that more than 90% of the school disciplinary actions employed purely negative consequences. While aversive consequences may be appropriate to help students become aware of the limits for acceptable behavior, an overreliance upon aversive strategies may increase the potential for student alienation from the teacher and the school. Moreover, the presentation of an aversive is likely to generate resistance and may even trigger intensified aggression and violence from the student as a means of countercontrol.

The use of punishment to deter undesirable behavior assumes (a) that the child knows how to behave in the given situation and willfully has selected to act in the undesirable manner and (b) that school personnel can deliver an aversive stimulus of sufficient magnitude to deter the undesired behavior. In many cases, both assumptions may be false. Children often have not been taught to value or to display desired prosocial behavior. Even when the child demonstrates the desired behavior under some conditions, he or she may not recognize all of the proper cues that should occasion the use of the skill(s) in question. As to a school's ability to employ an effective aversive, many of the children presenting aggressive and violent behavior live in homes and communities characterized by extreme violence, gross abuse, and neglect. These children, undoubtedly, have experienced the use of aversive treatment beyond anything the school might deliver Ethical and therapeutic considerations should dictate questioning the attempts to punish these children into behaving as educators wish.

Intervention strategies and programs designed to treat students who display chronic aggression and violence demonstrate only limited success in their ability to ameliorate these behaviors. While a number of strategies hold the promise to alter attitudes, cognitions, and behaviors, maintenance and generalization of treatment effects are rare (see reviews by Rutherford & Nelson, in press; Tolan & Guerra, 1994). Dodge (1993) has indicated that no intervention reported to date has produced results that last longer than 1 year. A number of possible reasons for this lack of prevent on and intervention effectiveness have been advanced:

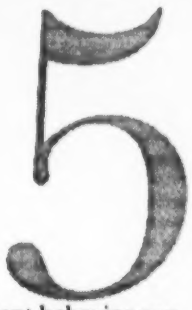
- Prevention and intervention efforts start too late in the individual's development. As mentioned earlier, serious, chronic

aggression and violence emerges very early in life, appears to be relatively stable, and is not readily amenable to change by the time it usually comes to the attention of society (Eron, 1994). Therefore, early intervention for both prevention and remediation purposes has been strongly recommended (American Psychological Association Commission on Youth Violence, 1993; Centers for Disease Control, 1993; National Research Council, 1993).

- Many programs have been short-term intervention efforts that seem to underestimate the stability of aggression and violence and the resistance these behaviors display to change efforts (Eron, 1994).
- Most intervention programs have been "unidimensional" in nature (Guerra, Huesmann, Tolan, Van Acker, & Eron, 1990). That is, they typically have attempted to impact only one or two risk factors associated with the development of aggression and violence (e.g., poor peer relations skills, deficits in cognitive processing). Moreover, these risk factors are typically targeted for intervention in only a single social system level (e.g., the family, peer group, or school context).

Thus, aggression and violence are remarkably resistant to change and clearly impact the nature of the interaction directed by and toward youth displaying such behaviors. Understanding which strategies and programs work requires more than simply reviewing program evaluations and identifying those showing statistically significant changes in behavior and adopting the most effective approach. The development of meaningful prevention and intervention programs demands a clear understanding of the nature of youth violence and aggression. These are complex social problems that take various forms. Comprehensive and long-term efforts targeting the full spectrum of violent and aggressive behaviors are needed. In particular, we have identified four types of violence that seem to require different types of intervention programs.

Types of Violent Behavior



Careful assessment of patterns of aggressive and violent behavior suggests that at least four types of youth violence can be distinguished. Each may result from differing risk factors, may impact different segments of the at-risk population, and may be amenable to differing approaches of prevention and treatment. The four types have been referred to as situational, relationship, predatory, and psychopathological violence (Guerra et al., in press; Tolan & Guerra, 1994). These types of violence can be placed along a multidimensional continuum. Differences in the proportion of the population likely to display each type and possible strategies for diminishing that type have been proposed in Table 2.

Situational Violence

This type of violence is thought to result from an interaction of personal frustration and setting or contextual variables. Situational violence is not particularly rare, and it has been estimated that approximately 40% or more of the population initiates one or more acts of situational violence sometime during their lifetime (Elliott, 1994; Tolan & Guerra, 1994). A number of situational factors have been identified as potential setting events for violence within the school. They include

- Extreme heat (Conroy & Fox, 1994).
- Crowded school conditions (see Brown, Fox & Brady, 1987 for a review of this literature).
- Seating and desk arrangements (Axelrod, Hall, & Tams, 1979; Nordquist & Twardosz, 1990; Rosenfield, Lambert, & Black, 1985).
- The length of transition times between instructional activities and the difficulty level and sequencing of tasks presented to students (Dunlap, Kern-Dunlap, Clarke, & Robbins, 1991; Krantz & Risley, 1977).

TABLE 2
Four Types of Youth Violence and Strategies to Diminish Each

Situational *Prevalence > 40%*	**Relationship** *Prevalence 25%*	**Predatory** *Prevalence 8%*	**Psycho-pathological** *Prevalence 0.5%*
Effective Instruction	Social Skills Training	Intensive Multifaceted and Multicontextual Interventions	Biomedical Intervention
Improved Physical Setting	Social Problem Solving		Alternative Education Placement
Improved School Climate	Conflict Resolution	Early Intervention Continued over an Extensive Period of Development	Residential Treatment
Anger Management	Peer-Directed Instruction		Correctional Placement
Anger Control	Prosocial Peer Involvement		Multisystem Intervention
Formal Behavior Instruction	Peer Mediation		Media Violence Education
School-Wide Discipline	Parent Training		
Instructional Consequences	Family Intervention		

For example, students may engage in aggressive or violent behavior to escape tasks they feel are too difficult. Conversely, research suggests that students who display violent behavior are often provided easy tasks by teachers wishing to avoid student behavioral outbursts (Carr et al., 1991; Gunter et al., 1993). In the former case, students are negatively reinforced for violence (the unwanted task is avoided), while in the latter case, the students are positively reinforced (provided an easy task). Similarly, frustration experienced by a student as he or she attempts to pursue a planned event or the occurrence of an unavoidable accident might trigger a violent outburst.

Children and youth who live in poor, urban neighborhoods and are members of racial, ethnic, or linguistic minorities are at greater risk for the development of violent behavior. The higher rates of violence carried out by and toward minority youth may reflect the powerful situational factors of social discrimination and oppression. The availability of violent role models, handguns, alcohol, and drugs within urban poor communities serves as a catalyst for increased youth violence. The schools in these areas are typically overcrowded and have limited resources.

Today, youth seem much more prone to a display of rage when confronted with situations in which they feel victimized or violated. Moreover, there seems to be a lowering of the flash point where these feelings trigger a response from the student, and retaliation often is seen as the necessary response. Thus, situational factors may exacerbate an individual's predisposition toward violence or increase the seriousness of the violent act.

Prevention and Treatment of Situational Violence

Teachers and other school personnel perhaps are equipped best to prevent episodes of situational violence associated with factors in the school environment. Much of the needed amelioration relates to the proactive application of known educational models to establish a positive instructional climate (e.g., effective schools). Effective instructional procedures have been shown to not only increase student achievement but also result in a reduction in the potential for classroom disruption and aggression (Gunter et al., 1994). Unfortunately, due to the variety of competing demands in the classroom, quality instruction is sometimes a rare commodity. Goodlad (1984) reported that teachers spend between 40% and 75% of their class time engaged in activities other than instruction.

Mastropieri and Scruggs (1987) have proposed a general model for teacher-led instruction. This model includes the following teacher functions:

- *Daily review* should begin each lesson. This will allow the teacher an opportunity to check student mastery of previously taught material. Questioning, reviewing homework, and seeking student-generated summaries of material from the previous lesson are possible activities.
- *Presentation of new material* is perhaps the most critical aspect of instruction. Teachers should provide advanced organizers that clarify the goals and main points of the lesson followed by a step-by-step presentation of new material. Modeling and demonstration of the skills or concepts being taught should be presented in a clear and effective manner. Teachers should monitor student understanding, especially those students who may be having difficulty that could trigger resistance or conflict.
- *Guided practice* designed to develop consistent and accurate responding under the direct observation of the teacher should be provided to ensure student understanding. Initially, the teacher is highly involved, modeling the correct steps of the task and slowly transferring responsibility to the students.

- *Corrective feedback* is provided throughout the presentation of new material and guided practice.
- *Independent practice* typically in the form of independent seatwork occurs only after students have achieved a high level of accuracy in guided practice.
- *Daily, weekly, and monthly reviews and evaluations* are employed to monitor student performance allowing teachers to adjust instruction if necessary.

The physical setting, including room arrangement, space utilization, seating arrangement, and the selection of instructional materials, may easily be adjusted by teachers. The schedule and the sequence of activities should be established to foster appropriate behavior. Providing a variety of activities that are interesting and that balance the amount of seatwork with more active tasks may reduce the risk for situational violence. If any one instructional strategy is employed for too long a period, student attention may wander and lead to increased disruption. Changes in the method of instructional delivery should be made before the student is "lost" (Walker et al., 1995). Curricular modifications appropriate for the individual student's level of functioning will ensure that the nature of the academic task provides the needed challenge combined with a high probability of academic success.

While setting modifications will help prevent the occurrence of situational violence, they do not in themselves provide the students with the skills needed to manage their own behavior in the face of frustration. Teachers need to incorporate instruction to help children understand those situations most likely to promote violence and to identify more socially appropriate means of dealing with their feelings of frustration. Walker, Colvin, and Ramsey (1995) suggest children need systematic instruction and practice in the following skills:

- Recognition of when they are feeling various emotions (e.g., anger, frustration).
- Identification of those situations and events that trigger their intense anger.
- Recognition of the unpleasant consequences that can result from displays of intense anger.
- The identification and use of appropriate methods to express anger and dissatisfaction.

Anger-management and anger-control strategies have been reported to assist children in dealing with their negative feelings and to reduce aggressive acts (Coie, Underwood, & Lochman, 1991). Even so, generali-

zation of the benefits of these strategies to nontraining contexts and settings is a problem (Dangel, Deschner, & Rapp, 1989; Feindler, 1987). Cross-context training (e.g., promotion of generalization to playground, involving parents for home transfer) can help. Relaxation training, self-talk strategies, cognitive mediation, behavioral rehearsal, and *in vivo* practice controlling emotions and negative feelings in social situations that occur within the classroom are examples of the types of strategies often employed. Table 3 provides some resources for anger-management and anger-control programs.

Once students and teachers gain an increased awareness of the specific situations that tend to trigger aggressive and violent behavior a formal behavior-instruction plan can be developed. These plans will assist students in developing the needed skills to avoid situational violence and to practice alternative appropriate solutions to problems that might arise. Colvin, Sugai, and Kameenui (1994) have identified the procedural steps for developing such plans:

1. Specify the desired behavior in understandable, observable, and measurable terms.
2. Explain and demonstrate the behavioral expectation to the student(s).
3. Provide structured activities that allow the student(s) to learn and practice the desired behavior.
4. Review desired behavior prior to involvement in problem setting or social situation.
5. Reinforce student(s) for demonstrations of desired behavior.

Step Four is an often overlooked management strategy. Providing students with an opportunity to review or practice the desired behavior prior to entry into a context or situation that generally proves problematic can be very effective. Often, educators wait until the student has displayed the undesired behavior in the setting and then issue a warning or other consequence. Providing a reminder or a review prior to the occurrence of problem behavior may help promote errorless learning of the desired behavior.

There will be times when teachers must deliver immediate consequences for undesired behaviors. The identification of effective consequences that reduce the future probability of the undesired behavior, while minimizing the probability of a power struggle, is problematic. Consequences for undesired behavior(s) should

TABLE 3
Resources for Anger-Management and Anger-Control Programs

Adolescent Anger Control. Feindler, E. L., & Ecton, R. B. (1986). New York: Pergamon.

Aggression Replacement Training: A Comprehensive Intervention for Aggressive Youth. Goldstein, A. P., & Glick, B. (1987). Champaign, IL: Research Press.

Anger Management for Youth. Eggert, D. L. (1994). Bloomington, IN: National Education Service.

Stress Inoculation Training. Meichenbaum, D. (1985). New York: Pergamon.

Think-Aloud: Cognitive-Behavioral Techniques. Camp, B. W., Blum, G., Hebert, F., & Van Doornick, W. (1977). *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, 5,* 152-169.

Thinking First: Anger and Aggression Management for Secondary Level Students. Larson, J. D. (1992). Whitewater, WI: Author.

- Minimize attention delivered to the student as the result of the target behavior. Consequences should be delivered quickly, in a very businesslike fashion. Avoid emotional exchanges.
- Minimize student resistance. That is, the consequence should not draw undue attention to the student that might embarrass him or her or require the student to attempt to "save face."
- Provide the student with the opportunity to increase his or her knowledge of the desired values, concepts, and/or behavior(s).
- Provide the student with the opportunity to practice desired alternative behaviors.
- Minimize the threat to the positive relationship between the student and the teacher. Students must realize that the consequence will be delivered as the teacher is consistent and dependable, yet the teacher continues to care for the student. Generally, strategic use of interpersonal skills is required for this to occur.

Developing a school-wide discipline program that incorporates more than a solely punitive approach should be considered. A significant portion of the violence displayed at school can be related to the child's response to attempts at punishing disruptive behavior. Recently, a number of schools have adopted instructional consequences for some forms

of school violence. For example, when students are referred for fighting, the consequence includes involvement in an age-appropriate anger-management program. Thus, students are assigned a consequence that provides instruction and opportunities to practice desired behaviors with feedback to the student available from adults. The money saved (Average Daily Attendance Funds) from not suspending the students more than paid for the new discipline program in one Illinois school district.

Student perceptions of prejudice, bias, and unfair treatment by school personnel are intensified with the increased cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity characteristic of many schools (Payne, 1991). These perceptions often lead to increased levels of conflict, aggression, and violence. Students from minority groups are significantly overrepresented in the number of students referred for special education services and of those suspended and expelled for disciplinary reasons. Not surprisingly, many of these students frequently fail to complete school. When school rules are perceived by students as being arbitrary, unfair, and inconsistently applied, much more school violence is apparent. Discipline and student management procedures must be selected that promote student self-responsibility and democratic practices. Examples of such programs include Judicious Discipline (Gathercoal, 1990) and Discipline with Dignity (Curwin & Mendler, 1988).

In all, situational violence is frequently displayed in the school setting as students confront circumstances for which they feel ill prepared to address successfully. School personnel can be instrumental in both the prevention and treatment of situational violence. Modifications to the physical setting and school climate, as well as the adoption of effective instructional techniques, can prevent many of the situations reported to promote this type of violence in the school. Teachers also can provide information to assist students in the recognition of potentially problematic situations. Instruction in the use of strategies to deal appropriately with feelings of anger and frustration can be presented. This instruction should be provided proactively (prior to problem situations) and reactively (as part of a consequence for undesired behavior).

Relationship Violence

Although relationship violence impacts people in all age groups, it is especially prominent in our schools. In fact, one fourth of American children and youth are thought to be directly affected by relationship violence (Widom, 1989). This type of violence arises from interpersonal disputes between persons with ongoing relationships, especially among

friends and family members and accounts for much of the violence in this country (Heller, Ehrlich, & Lester, 1983). For example, more than half of juvenile homicides involve friends and acquaintances (Elliott, 1994). Violence involving friends and relations may erupt out of an unusual crisis situation (as situational violence), but more frequently, relationship violence is displayed periodically as a characteristic of the interrelationship. There also is evidence that patterns of relationship violence are stable over time and can pass from one generation to the next (Eron, 1994). Violence displayed between parents has been shown to increase the violence demonstrated by the children in the family even if the children themselves are not physically abused.

Aggressive behavior may be displayed as youth enter adolescence, even those whose social adjustment previously has been successful, in response to new social systems and social problems that must be negotiated. Issues of social status, personal competence, the development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships and intimacy all create new stressful demands. For example, Adler, Kless, and Adler (1992) conducted a 4-year ethnographic study of popularity and gender roles in elementary school students from predominantly middle- to upper-middle-class neighborhoods. These investigators found that the most popular groups of boys were often distinguished from other groups by their high levels of defiance to adult authority, challenges to existing rules, and higher numbers of disciplinary actions. Dating provides another context wherein conflicts and misunderstandings can lead to relationship violence.

Within the school setting, disagreements between friends and acquaintances constitute the vast majority of disputes, arguments, and physical assaults. Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, many children enter school without the skills necessary to manage their own behavior, to successfully interact with others, or to resolve conflicts in a prosocial manner. For example, a number of researchers suggest that aggressive children frequently distort socially benign situations, which results in attributions of hostility to others (Dodge, 1985; Dodge, Pettit, McClaskey, & Brown, 1986). When problems arise, the students do not know how to navigate the difficult waters of social problem-solving. Instead, they resort to antisocial and aggressive solutions that have been too frequently modeled for them in their environment (e.g., family, community, and/or media violence).

Dodge and his associates (Dodge, 1980; Dodge, Coie, & Brakke, 1982) suggest that aggressive youth display significant difficulty as they attempt to deal with the demands of three social interaction situations involving peers and adults:

- Joining ongoing peer groups. Entering into an activity generally proves problematic as these students employ strategies leading to rejection.
- Teasing and provocation by others. This often results in extreme anger, threats, tantrums, and retaliation.
- Complying with requests made by teachers and peers.

These types of social interactions are quite frequent in the school setting. Thus, problems in adequately addressing any or all of these situations places the child at greater risk for rejection by peers and teachers.

In peer associations, children engage in a dual process of both maintaining old and creating new behaviors, beliefs, and values. This naturally occurs in the social interactions of peer associates because the structure and dynamics of social exchange support synchrony and similarity in their characteristics. When peer associates interact they serve two masters: (a) their own internal goals and directions and (b) the maintenance of the relationship. To meet these goals, peer associates must adopt common directions. That is, they must synchronize their behaviors so that the actions of each support the actions of the other. These synchronized interchanges produce similar patterns of emotional expression, thinking, and actions among the peer associates. As students develop, they tend to select or to be selected into new social networks similar to their prior ones. In turn, continuity in social networks supports continuity in one's beliefs, values, and behaviors. This is because of similarities in the demands made by the social environment and similarities in how others relate to the individual (Bolger, Caspi, Downey, & Moorehouse, 1988).

Student peer groups or social networks impact upon student aggression and violence. Aggressive students bond together as a recognizable group to both themselves and peers and spend time together during and after school (Cairns, Cairns, Neckerman, Gest, & Gariepy, 1988; Dishion, 1990). Their pattern of social interaction frequently differs from that of other children. For example, aggressive peer groups spend significantly less time in structured games and activities during recess and after school (Barone, Leone, & Trickett, 1988). Peer group members reinforce one another's beliefs and attitudes about aggression and violence. These students may tend to construct their own "culture of hostility." The normative beliefs support continued involvement in violent behavior (Guerra & Slaby, 1990; Slaby & Guerra, 1988).

The relationship between students and teacher also may provoke violent behavior. Research suggests that, in general, teachers provide stu-

dents with far greater levels of verbal reprimand than praise (Denny, Epstein, & Rose, 1992; Goodlad, 1984). This is especially true for those students most at risk for aggressive and violent behavior (Van Acker et al., 1994). When confronted with a problematic or resistive student, teachers often experience increased physiological arousal, sometimes leading to a decrease in good judgment (Smith, 1981). In such situations, teachers may respond with greater resistance themselves, arbitrary punishments, threats, and sarcastic comments. Students react with increased hostility or violent acts confirming teacher (and peer) expectations. This power struggle is becoming far too common in schools that seem to demand greater productivity from a student body less prepared to meet those demands.

Prevention and Treatment of Relationship Violence

Many experts agree that programs aimed at reducing school violence must address the personal-relationship aspect of violence. Effective social behavior is critical for success in most situations throughout life. These skills increase one's ability to form friendships and develop social support networks. Children and youth at risk for the development of aggressive and violent behavior demonstrate significantly different and less effective strategies in social interactions with peers and adults (Dodge & Frame, 1982; Patterson & Bank, 1989). These ineffective strategies and social skill deficits can lead to rejection by peers. Moreover, research suggests that teachers are extremely intolerant of disruptive behavior and establish rather rigid standards of behavior to which students are expected to conform (Gersten, Walker, & Darch, 1988).

Although, most children seem to develop appropriate social skills vicariously, this is not the case for students who display aggressive and violent behaviors. These students must be provided with planned, direct, and systematic instruction. Instructional procedures similar to those used when teaching academic subject matter have been shown to be most effective. Social skill programs provide students with

- Instructions about specific social skills and ways these target skills will prove useful to them in daily interactions.
- Modeling and multiple examples that demonstrate each target skill and the social cues that should occasion its use.
- Demonstrations of examples and non-examples of the critical attributes of the target social skill(s).
- Coaching and verbally prompting students through initial attempts at the new skill(s).

- Practice and rehearsal of the new skills. This must be provided frequently if these new skills are going to become an active part of the student's behavioral repertoire. Only with practice is there hope to have newly acquired problem-solving skills replace the aggressive and violent patterns that have often become "automatic" for many youth.
- Feedback and contingent reinforcement in both training and natural settings to facilitate skill acquisition, generalization, and maintenance.

Clearly, social skill training is only part of the solution in the treatment of youth with aggressive and violent behavior. Incorporating social skill lessons into the set of consequences for undesired social behavior enables the student to learn prosocial behaviors and practice them. A multitude of social skills, problem-solving, and conflict resolution curricula are now in existence. Examples are provided in Table 4.

Regular classroom curricula (e.g., reading, social studies, history) also provide fertile ground for developing social and conflict-resolution skills. For example, in the Student Training Through Urban Strategies program (Gottfredson, 1987), students at risk for aggression are enrolled in a combined English and social studies class to heighten their legal and social awareness while increasing their enthusiasm for learning. Five units are presented over the course of the year, each exploring issues related to a major societal institution. The curriculum provides information about human relations, legal issues, society and the family, employment and career markets, and skills in developing short- and long-term life goals.

Social problem-solving skills and conflict resolution can become part of any course content that involves attitudes and/or values. As violence is often displayed within and learned through family relationships, family living courses also provide an excellent opportunity to address family violence as a critical component of their curriculum. Hypothetical conflicts or social problems can be presented to groups of students for additional practice at problem identification, perspective taking, and the generation of solutions. Finally, teachers can take advantage of the multiple opportunities that occur in the classroom to teach children incidentally how to solve problems while interacting socially. For example, actual student disputes, if identified prior to either party becoming too angry, can provide an opportune time to have children attempt to explore their own and others' feelings and to think about solutions. However the teacher chooses to provide these opportunities to practice social problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills, the key is to build

TABLE 4
Social Skills Programs and Curricula for Aggressive and Violent Youth

Adolescent Coping Curriculum for Effective Social Skills (ACCESS). Walker, H.M., Todis, J., Homes, D., & Horton, D. (1988). Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

Getting Along with Others: Teaching Social Effectiveness to Children. Jackson, N.F., Jackson, D.A., & Monroe, C. (1983). Champaign, IL: Research Press.

The Prepare Curriculum. Goldstein, A.P. (1988). Champaign, IL: Research Press.

Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum. Prothrow-Stith, D. (1987). Committee for Children, 172 20th Avenue, Seattle, WA. 98122.

Skillstreaming the Elementary School Child. McGinnis, E., & Goldstein, A.P. (1984). Champaign, IL: Research Press.

Skillstreaming the Adolescent. Goldstein, A.P., Sprafkin, R.P., Gershaw, N.J., & Klein, P. (1980). Champaign, IL: Research Press.

Teaching Social Skills: A Practical Instructional Approach curriculum. Rutherford, R.B., Chipman, J., DiGangi, S.A., & Anderson, K. (1992). Ann Arbor,MI: Exceptional Innovations.

The Walker Social Skills Curriculum: The ACCEPTS Program. Walker, H.M., McConnell, S., Holmes, D., Todis, B., Walker, J., & Golden, N. (1983). Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

upon previously learned and developed skills and allow processing time after the experience (Van Acker, 1993). Moral reasoning, social perspective taking, and role-taking activities are effective approaches to intervention (Arbuthnot & Gordon, 1986; Chandler, 1973).

A variety of instructional strategies lend themselves to the promotion of social skills, social problem solving, and conflict resolution. Cooperative learning, reciprocal teaching, and cross-grade peer tutoring offer students the opportunity to develop and practice prosocial interaction with only a minimal sacrifice of academic learning time. With the increased demands on instructional time, teachers must begin to "work smarter and not harder." The use of procedures that allow teachers to meet two or more goals at the same time should be maximized. For example, cooperative learning has been shown to increase achievement and promote positive social interaction (Johnson & Johnson, 1986; Slavin, 1984). The steps involved in establishing a cooperative learning structure include

- Identify the specific instructional (academic and social) goals to be taught.
- Divide the class into small teams, typically four or five students per team. The teams should be heterogeneous with regard to the skills being taught.
- Structure the task to maximize team-member interdependence (e.g., through specific task assignment). Collaboration should be required by the nature of the task for the team to succeed. Develop a group goal for team members.
- Monitor and provide feedback to teams. Reinforce desired academic and social behavior.
- Evaluate student learning *individually* and assign points to teams (toward team goal) *on the basis of student improvement*. Teams can compete against each other, a set criterion, or their own previous achievement.

Having students serve as peer tutors for students within or across different classrooms allows teachers to provide important academic and social skill practice activities to their students with diverse needs. For example, students with reading deficits might be provided opportunities to read to younger students in another classroom. Peer tutors often demonstrate increased interest in the material (e.g., previewing the reading material), greater motivation, responsibility, and more investment in the school setting (increased school bonding).

A variety of peer-group intervention programs have been designed to treat students displaying aggressive and violent behaviors. Generally, these programs attempt to modify student behavior by changing the nature of the peer-group interaction. This can be done through shifting peer-group norms, promoting youth involvement with more prosocial peers, and redirecting the activities of antisocial peer groups and youth gangs.

Guided Group Interaction (GGI), sometimes referred to as Positive Peer Culture (PPC) or Peer Group Counseling (PGC), is an approach where youth are provided intensive group activities designed to restructure peer interactions and increase conformity to prosocial norms (Howlett & Boehm, 1975; Vorrath & Brendtro, 1974). GGI encourages participants to recognize their own problematic behavior, attitudes, and values. An adult leader promotes group interaction by asking questions, creating norms of reassurance, repeating ideas expressed in the group, and summarizing important ideas. Evaluative studies have indicated that when groups are comprised of antisocial and/or delinquent youth,

GGI has *negative* effects on attitudes toward school and on self-report and official contact measures of delinquency (Gottfredson, 1987). Interestingly, Feldman (1992) reported that when prosocial youth were integrated into the GGI groups significantly better outcomes were reported. It appears as if the prosocial youth maintained their prosocial attitudes and behavior in these mixed groups, and the improved normative beliefs of the group elevated the behavior of the referred aggressive youth.

Similar results have been found in studies exploring the effectiveness of programs designed to prevent gang recruitment and redirect gang members toward more prosocial community activity. Klein (1971) provided academic tutoring and athletic and social events to 800 members of four gangs. These activities put gang members into greater contact with one another and resulted in increased criminal activity. Only when these program components were offered in a way that did not promote increased gang member interaction did the level of criminal behavior decrease. The research evidence strongly supports the involvement of prosocial youth within the intervention peer group structures. It seems reasonable to conclude that pull-out programs to deliver services to groups of aggressive youth divorced from their prosocial peers should be avoided (Walker et al., 1995).

Rather than limit the opportunities for interaction between students displaying aggression and their nonaggressive peers, these interactions should be maximized. Schools should increase efforts to involve students displaying aggression in the structured activities available within the school (e.g., clubs, sports, special activities). These must be viewed not as privileges that can be denied these students as a consequence for inappropriate behavior but rather as a critical teaching setting wherein prosocial interaction can be modeled and feedback provided.

Peer-mediation programs (e.g., Schrumpf, Crawford, & Usadel, 1991) have been employed by schools to provide students with a voluntary alternative to the traditional school discipline procedures for resolving disputes, conflicts, and simple altercations between peers. In peer-mediation programs students are provided specialized human relations training (e.g., active listening, reflection, empathy, confrontation) that promotes conflict resolution skills. These peers are available to work in teams to help other students to resolve their conflicts. Common steps in a peer mediation include

- Opening statements that include introductions, rules, and the purpose of the mediation.
- Statements from each disputant as to the nature of the problem.
- Statements from each disputant indicating what he or she heard the other disputant say.
- Clarification of issues and exploration of feelings and emotions.
- Identification of common issues and feelings.
- Brainstorming of possible solutions.
- Evaluation of potential solutions and choice of a "win/win" solution agreeable to both disputants.
- Completion of a written agreement and closing.

Peer-mediation programs should include some youth with behavior problems as mediators, especially those with leadership qualities and influence with their peers. The combination of the mediation training and extensive practice gained through assisting other children to solve their conflicts has resulted in significant gains for the mediators above the level gained by disputants. Changes in normative beliefs about aggression, social problem-solving skills, and discipline referrals have been reported (Van Acker, Grant, Moriarty, & McDonald, in press). Moreover, participation as a mediator provides the student with sanctioned involvement in a major school activity increasing the student's sense of responsibility and bonding with the school.

Family interaction can play a major role in the development of relationship violence. In some cases, youth are the victims of child abuse or are displaying aggressive and violent behavior that has been modeled in their families. In other cases, the child has been exposed to parenting practices that contribute to the development of antisocial behavior. Parenting practices related to the development of aggression and violence include

- Inconsistent and coercive discipline.
- Noncontingent reinforcement.
- Emotional disengagement and/or unsatisfying familial interactions.
- Ineffective problem-solving skills.
- Minimal or poor supervision and child-behavior-monitoring skills.

Family interventions have been shown to be effective in reducing aggressive behavior. Parent training programs offered by schools or other

community social service agencies have effectively targeted punitive and coercive interaction patterns between parents and their children (Dumas, 1989). More extensive efforts targeting family cohesion and shared belief systems that promote aggressive interaction, in addition to ineffective discipline practices, have been shown to promote decreased behavior problems (Henggler, Melton, & Smith, 1992).

Relationship violence is a serious problem in the schools. As children enter the school setting, they often engage in behavioral interactions that recreate the coercive patterns found in their homes. Moreover, the school setting increases the social interaction networks of the child and presents new types of relationships that may prove problematic. Educators must begin to recognize and accept that the skills and knowledge children must learn to be socially successful need to be taught and practiced in a fashion similar to that employed for academic skills. Schools would do well to find more effective means to increase rather than decrease the interaction of aggressive and violent children with their more prosocial peers. Family functioning and parenting practices must also be targeted for intervention.

Predatory Violence

This type of violence has been the most frequently studied one. Predatory violence is perpetrated intentionally as part of a pattern of criminal or antisocial behavior and generally results in some personal gain (Tolan & Guerra, 1994). Gang assaults, robbery, thefts, and muggings are common forms of this type of violence. While as many as 20% of adolescents have reported participation in predatory violence, only a small portion of this group, 5% to 8% of males and 3% to 6% of females, are responsible for the vast majority of these violent acts (Tracey et al., 1990). Most predatory violence reflects a pattern of serious chronic antisocial behavior.

Within the school setting, bullying is one of the most problematic forms of predatory violence. While sometimes displayed toward a target child by a single individual, bullying is more typically carried out by a hostile group of peers (Olweus, 1991). Intimidation, coercion, and threats to safety and well-being are involved. Fear of being bullied is reported as the most pervasive outcome of school violence. An estimated one-fourth of all students experience bullying, and over 160,000 students miss school each day due to the fear of being bullied (Lee, 1993). There is evidence that bullying is intergenerational: The bully at school is the victim at home (Widom, 1989).

Gangs and gang affiliation for aggressive and violent youth represent another challenge to school personnel. These subgroups, particularly in disorganized and impoverished neighborhoods, provide youth with a sense of safety, food, shelter, and clothing. In addition, the gang facilitates its members' sense of acceptance, belonging, and self-worth. Gang membership, however, greatly increases the risk for both the perpetration of and victimization by serious violence (Elliott, 1994).

Prevention and Treatment of Predatory Violence

The most serious form of predatory violence appears to develop slowly over time and is dependent upon the interaction of multiple risk factors (individual and societal variables). Intensive and early prevention and treatment intervention methods, therefore, are advised (Eron, 1994; Guerra et al., in press; Moffitt, 1993). Single-component, short-term interventions have not proven to be effective in changing predatory patterns of aggression and violence (Tolan & Guerra, 1994). Effective prevention and treatment of this persistent form of aggression and violence requires affecting several individual and environmental risk factors, and the processes of their interaction, over a significant period of the child's development (Lipsey, 1990). A significant limitation of many previous prevention and intervention studies has been their failure to address these risk factors simultaneously. While several interventions have produced modest gains in specific groups of individuals, the utility of short-term, unidimensional interventions for the prevention of predatory violence is, at best, questionable. Kazdin, Bass, Siegel, and Thomas (1989) have noted that "a single focus on a particular set of processes within the child, or home, or school alone is unlikely to provide the breadth and magnitude of changes required to alleviate the problem clinically. At this point, a more comprehensive treatment focus that addresses multiple domains needs testing" (p. 534).

Comprehensive programs have been developed and show promising results. For example, Olweus (1991) has reported an effective program to reduce bullying in schools that involves teachers, parents, and students. This program targets both the bullies and their victims for intervention. Some of the key features include

- A full-day school conference focusing upon bully/victim dynamics.
- Teacher discussion groups to promote improved school climate.
- Parent-study circles to discuss bullying and school violence and aggression.

- Improved rules against bullying, better supervision, and immediate consequences involving the students and the parents of the bully and the victim.
- Classroom discussions, role plays, and presentations on ways to avoid, prevent, and deal with bullying and victimization.

In 1968, James Comer and a team of specialists from the Yale Child Study Center implemented a comprehensive change project within two of New Haven's worst elementary schools. The team began with the idea that if basic principles of child development and social science could be applied to schools, these settings would become healthier environments for both the students and their teachers. The model has three critical components:

- A governance team, composed of all the adult stakeholders in the school and led by the principal, is responsible for developing a comprehensive social and academic plan for the school. Staff development, student and program assessment, and program adjustment are the responsibility of this governance team.
- A parents program attempts to involve as many parents as possible in the social activities, volunteer activities, and work of the governance team.
- A mental health team works to encourage both teachers and parents to develop meaningful relationships with the students and to establish developmentally appropriate plans. The mental health team also assists teachers and parents in developing solutions to the problems of individual students.

Significant improvements in test scores, parent participation, student and teacher attendance, and reductions in the number of student suspensions in Comer schools have led to the adoption of this model in schools across the country. Formal explorations of the impact of this model on aggressive and violent students *per se* has not been undertaken. However, such a system-wide approach could hold promise for the establishment of social system networks needed to meet the needs of students at risk for aggression, their parents, and their teachers.

Two longitudinal studies funded by the National Institute of Mental Health represent efforts to apply promising intervention practices across a variety of individual and environmental risk factors. Both studies, initiated in 1991, intend to follow their students through 2005, providing the ability to explore both the short- and long-term impact of these extensive intervention efforts. While only preliminary results are avail-

able at this time, both projects report positive results from their comprehensive programs.

Fast Track (Coie, Lochman, Dodge, Greenberg, Bierman, & McMahon, 1990) identifies children at the end of their kindergarten school year from neighborhoods with high crime rates. Those children rated as high-risk for the development of antisocial behavior both at home and in the school are selected for participation in a 2-year intervention:

- School-wide interventions are implemented to promote a classroom and school environment that is more accepting, more instructionally effective, more responsive to the needs of the children, and more disciplined.
- The high-risk children are provided more intensive services, including academic tutoring, social-skills training, and problem-solving sessions.
- Regularly scheduled parent groups are provided to assist parents in finding ways to help their children adjust to the school setting. Teachers participate in the parent groups to facilitate the parent/school partnership.
- Booster sessions of the targeted skills and social support are provided to high-risk students as they enter key transition points in their school careers (e.g., entry into middle school).

The Metropolitan Area Child Study (MACS; Guerra et al., 1990) has been designed to examine the short- and long-term effectiveness of three procedures on preventing the emergence of serious antisocial behavior (e.g., aggression, violence, delinquency). Students are identified through a combination of teacher ratings and peer nominations. Those students identified by both groups as high-risk for aggression are assigned to services delivered during their second-, third-, fifth-, and sixth-grade years in elementary school. Three levels of procedures are being evaluated. Each becomes more intensive and intrusive. These include

- A general-enhancement, classroom-based, social-cognitive and teacher-training program.
- The general-enhancement program *plus* an intensive peer-focused social-cognitive training program.
- The general-enhancement program *plus* the peer-focused training *plus* a family relations intervention for targeted high-risk children and their families.

The classroom-enhancement component involves a series of educational seminars for teachers and school personnel to increase (a) cultural awareness and sensitivity, (b) effective instructional strategies for classrooms

serving students with diverse academic and social needs, and (c) proactive and instructional classroom management and discipline. MACS personnel provide feedback to teachers on their implementation of effective strategies and collaborative support. All students are involved in a social-cognitive problem-solving curriculum *(Yes I Can)*. The peer-focused training provides intensive coverage of material similar to that presented in the class-wide, social-cognitive curriculum. The students, however, are provided increased time for discussion, structured exercises, and role-playing activities. Finally, the family relations component provides families with assistance in their selection of effective methods for behavior management, problem solving, and family communication.

Predatory violence represents a serious and stable form of violence. Bullying and gang violence are typical manifestations in the school setting. Efforts to prevent and treat this type of violence require interventions that start early and continue over a significant period of time. Programs must target multiple risk factors and relevant aspects of various contexts (classroom/school, peer group, family) which have been shown empirically to be most influential in the development of these problem behaviors. Schools may wish to establish network linkages with community social service providers.

Psychopathological Violence

The fourth and final type of violence, psychopathological, is the rarest, yet often the most serious, type of violence observed. Less than one half of one percent of the population is thought to participate in this type of violent behavior. Severe psychological trauma and neural dysfunction resulting in individual pathology have been suggested as underlying causes (Cornell, Benedek, & Benedek, 1987; Lewis, Shanock, Pincus, & Glaser, 1979). The violent behavior is thought to represent a byproduct of the pathology rather than a response to a specific situational provocation or an aspect of a developing criminal career.

Fortunately, psychopathological violence is a rare phenomenon within the school environment. When this type of violence occurs, however, the increased media coverage can contribute to children's fears of violence and a general belief that the world is a hostile place that puts them in constant danger. Because of their prevalence, media presentations of bizarre psychopathological violence –both as part of their news coverage and as "entertainment" (e.g., films and television programming)—are far more damaging to more children than the real but slight risk of falling victim to an actual crime of this nature. To give an ex-

ample of the prevalence of media presentations of violence, the average child views three murders on television each night (Singer & Singer, 1986).

Prevention and Treatment of Psychopathological Violence

There is little research on effective treatment of children and youth displaying psychopathological violence. Psychotherapeutic interventions aimed at changing interpsychic factors thought to underlie psychopathological violence are not uncommon. These approaches alone, however, have not proven effective (Kazdin, 1989). Psychopharmacological treatment of aggressive and antisocial youth has been attempted with some success. Platt, Campbell, Green, and Grega (1984) reported that lithium carbonate plus Haloperidol was effective in reducing the aggressive behavior of hospitalized children (under age 14) with conduct disorders. Propranolol, an adrenergic blocking agent, also has been reported to reduce the episodic loss of control in adolescents with a history of psychological trauma (Grizenko & Vida, 1988).

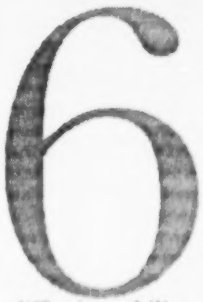
Students displaying psychopathological violence, generally have educational needs that require special education services. Frequently, these students are educated in alternative schools, residential treatment centers, and/or correctional facilities. Placement in any one of these types of programs represents "an event within a larger process, a disruption of the usual adaptive process that occurs between a child and his or her environment" (Curry, 1991, p. 352). This disruption well may be justified, and extremely valuable treatment and learning may occur in these programs. Even so, placement in residential, alternative, or correctional programs is not likely, in itself, to lead to good future adaptation (Andrews et al., 1990; Curry, 1991). For placement to have meaningful results with any hope for generalization, support for the child in his or her future environment must be enhanced. To maximize the potential for this type of educational/treatment placement to produce durable effects, programs must provide

- Services to the child and the family for extensive periods of time, only part of which is delivered while the child is in alternative placement.
- Extensive after-care treatment.
- Opportunities for learning strategies and skills that can be generalized to meet realistic community demands in the natural environment.

Intensive community-based programs, particularly when they include family and cognitive behavioral intervention components, have been successful with younger children.

Children—especially younger children—often believe that television portrayals of violence are realistic (Eron, 1986; Huesmann, 1986). Children often identify closely with television actors and therefore copy their aggressive behavior. Some researchers suggest that this adds to an increased belief and subsequent development of a "mean society" (Eron, 1986; Singer & Singer, 1986; Turner et al., 1986). Interventions designed to assist children (and families) to practice critical-television-viewing skills have proven helpful. The viewing of prosocial behavior on television coupled with role-play has also been successful in the reduction of aggressive play in younger children (Eron, 1986).

Conclusion



Four types of violence can be identified that seem to differ in stability, prevalence, causes, and appropriate interventions. National attention often has focused on only the most serious types of violence (psychopathological and serious predatory violence), concentrating on the "tip of the iceberg" while generally overlooking the bigger picture. Relationship violence and situational violence represent the most pervasive forms of violent behavior, impacting the greatest number of people. This is especially true in U.S. schools. Each type of violence carries with it differing levels of harm. Violent acts that result in physical injury promote a climate of fear and anxiety. Students who have been injured, or fear being injured, suffer psychological stress that can interfere with their healthy social and academic development. The psychological harm and anxiety resulting from bullying, harassment, and threats, however, also can inhibit students' developmental potential and must be addressed in violence prevention.

Focusing on only the most serious types of violence may be ineffective when it comes to addressing school violence. Armed with a better understanding of the variations of violence, however, teachers and school officials can identify reasonable targets for intervention. Schools can adopt a number of approaches to deal with the various risk factors related to the different types of violence. Social and emotional skills for dealing with anger, problem identification, perspective-taking, negotiating, and development of alternative solutions should become targets of systematic instruction within the school. Violence prevention strategies must be incorporated into the academic curricula. Instructional consequences for acts of undesired social behavior are possible as an alternative to increasingly aversive approaches that have little hope for promoting increased bonding with the school. Ultimately, each school needs school-wide programs that increase the motivation of high-risk youth to attend and perform in school and to have more prosocial roles in schools and communities.

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